

North Central Region Pest Management Center

Quarterly Update to National Steering Committee

February 19, 2003

North Central IPM Facilitator - During October, Sue Ratcliffe visited Fred Fishel and other faculty members at the University of Missouri to discuss state and regional IPM programs and priorities. She had an opportunity to participate in their Plant Protection Program Steering Committee Meeting and provide an overview of the IPM Facilitator position and the NC IPM Center. She also participated in the North Central and Great Plains Regional Plant Diagnostic Center Network meetings. In November, she attended the National Entomological Society of American meeting and presented a poster (co-authored by Jim Van Kirk) entitled: ***Pest Management Centers: Coordinating the Delivery of IPM Information in the United States.*** Sue and Lynnae Jess, Assistant Director of the NC PMC, worked with national and regional contacts to initiate the creation of the NC-504 Soybean Rust Committee. The first meeting of the group was held on February 16 – 17, 2003 in St. Louis in conjunction with the NCR-137 and NCR-200 committee meetings. Sue is also a member of the State and Federal Technical Science Working Group on Soybean Rust. Mike Gray and Sue conducted the FY03 NC RIPM Grant Program peer review and nine proposals have been recommended for funding as a result of this review (Attachment 1). Sue was invited to serve as a keynote speaker at the 2003 Illinois Crop Protection Technology Conference where she presented information on the role of the regional IPM Centers and the Diagnostic Centers. She continues to work with other members of the 4th National IPM Symposium Planning Committee.

Year 3 Pest Management Center Renewal Grants - Larry Olsen managed the development, review and circulation of the year 3 RFP to maintain a regional information network. The renewal RFP circulated on June 28 resulted in 12 proposals requesting \$975,997. A totally external Technical Peer Review panel consisting of four former PIAP persons with IPM experience, one from each USDA region, was used to evaluate the proposals by conference call October 18, 2002. Based on their comments, all PIs received letters expressing concerns in their proposals on October 25. The PIs rewrote their proposals to clarify and explain their year three work plan. Based on the revised proposals and budgets, the Steering Committee met November 22 by conference call to discuss the peer review panel comments, merit of the proposals, progress made on the second year proposals, and the level of funding recommended for this year. They decided that suitable progress was made on all projects reviewed, and approved all year 3 revised proposals and budgets. A total of \$935,326 was distributed to the states in year three. Our year 3 grant from Washington had budgeted \$886,072 for subcontracts, but \$85,830 unspent from year two travel funds were transferred to the year three subcontract line to fund these proposals. Proposals were sent to USDA December 26, 2002 for their approval. USDA's approval was received at MSU on January 16, 2003, and MSU's Contract and Grant Administration is now preparing all renewal subcontracts. Attachment 2 lists the projects that were funded, who received them, and the proposed work products. We also funded three mini-grants during year three for an additional \$37,901. The first is to cover partial costs for the 4th National IPM Symposium, the second for 'Weeds To Watch' at Iowa State, and the third for 'Monitoring an Invasive Weed in Ohio Vegetable Fields'.

Pest Management Strategic Plans -The Michigan Celery PMSP is completed and on the web site under Mary Hausbeck's leadership. The field corn PMSP for North Central Region, lead by Dave Pike Illinois project leader, is now on the web site. Dave and George Smith, Missouri project leader, visited EPA and OPMP staff in Washington DC to go over the corn PMSP. The popcorn PMSP, also lead by Dave Pike, is in final draft and will be on the web site soon. He also met with the Popcorn Board to discuss the popcorn PMSP and future directions. The Michigan Onion PMSP was held November 4 and 5 in East Lansing. The NCR Soybean PMSP under the leadership of George Smith was held November 7 and 8 in St Louis. The cabbage PMSP for Minnesota and Wisconsin was held November 12 and 13 in Madison. On December 17-18 a regional sweet corn PMSP was lead by Dave Pike. This was done at the request of the Midwest Food Processors.

NC Pest Management Center Advisory Committee - The Advisory Committee for the NC Region was scheduled to meet on October 22-23, 2002 in Kansas City to report progress on year three activities and provide input for the next cycle RFA for Regional Pest Management Centers. As the release of the RFA was delayed from mid-September until mid-December, the meeting was postponed until February 25, 2003. Members were notified, but still expressed an interest in being involved in developing our next proposal.

Information Technology / Website - Work this quarter included routine management of the NCPMC website hardware, software and content: removing broken and adding new links from states, posting new documents (PMSPs, Crop Profiles, Year 2 state final reports, etc).

In December Pat Bills represented the NCR PM Center at the Technical Committee meeting in Raleigh. This was a very productive and forward thinking meeting with great cooperation among the regions. Some of the goals agreed upon were to: (1) identify issues of synchrony among regional and national website content; (2) provide technical solutions to these issues that are as flexible as possible (can be implemented, and developed as a team); (3) provide these solutions while not dictating any policy on how websites need to be generated; and (4) extending these solutions to states and sub-regions for those state pest management center project leaders who have websites. In general, the policy of the NCR is to maintain consistency and cooperation with the national web site. Crop profile synchrony was the major issue discussed: regions and states would like to post crop profiles on their own site, in effect to receive credit for contributions to these important documents. The NCR has solved this issue by showing a crop profile document as it exists in the national database, but inside each states and the NCR website.

A good example of a technical solution from this meeting was addressing a maintenance problem for regional web editors: an automatic sitemap program to help web sites in other regions go directly to relevant pages in our region (eg. Any crop profile to NC crop profile). Programmers from the national site provided a Cold Fusion web application that Pat modified, installed, and contributed improvements.

Background information for the NC-504 Soybean Rust Committee was put on the NCPMC web site for members to review prior to attending the first meeting of NC-504 on February 16-17, 2003. Lynnae Jess chaired the committee meeting.

Submitted by Larry G. Olsen